

The American Legion is very concerned about the safety and well being of our nation's youth. Every year thousands of children die of preventable accidents and injuries.

THE AMERICAN LEGION
AMERICANISM AND CHILDREN & YOUTH



Play It Safe

Safe Children Are No Accident.

Play It Safe

As the world's largest veterans organization, The American Legion embodies strong American values and forms a grassroots force dedicated to love of country and committed to veterans, their families, their communities, and the young people of this nation.

For more information on keeping children safe:

American Association of Poison Control Centers
(800)-222-1222
www.aapcc.org

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
(888)-327-4236
www.nhtsa.dot.gov

National Rifle Association
(800) 231-0752
www.nrahq.org

National Safety Council
(630) 285-1121
www.nsc.org

United States Fire Administration
(301) 447-1000
www.usfa.dhs.gov



THE AMERICAN LEGION
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CHILDREN & YOUTH

P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206
www.legion.org

Safe Children Are No Accident.



This brochure lists the six most common causes of accidental death for children, newborn to age 19, with some tips on how to protect children from these avoidable causes. Education and preparedness are the keys to avoiding accidents that can lead to a child's death. Please take time to review this information and do your part to protect our nation's most valuable resource – our children.

Safe kids are no accident. Choose to Play it Safe!

Play It Safe

Safe Children Are No Accident.

SIX MOST COMMON CAUSES OF ACCIDENTAL DEATH FOR CHILDREN

1. MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

Over half of the children who die in motor vehicle accidents are not restrained in child safety seats or are improperly restrained.

Laws regarding child restraints and seat belts vary by state; however, experts agree that the safest location in an automobile for a child is the back seat. Check with your local law enforcement agency or department of motor vehicles for your state's requirements.

Most states offer programs to help low income families obtain required child car and booster seats. Check with your local department of motor vehicles. In addition, many local law enforcement agencies offer free car seat inspections to ensure the car seat has been properly installed.



The appropriate use of car seats, booster seats, and appropriate seat belt use saves thousands of children every year.

2. DROWNING

Tragedy can happen in a few brief seconds. Never take chances by leaving children unattended around water and observe the following water safety tips.

Indoors

Never leave a baby or toddler alone or with an older sibling in the bath, not even for a second.

Children have drowned in toilets. Keep toilet lids down or locked.

A curious toddler can easily drown in a bucket with only a small amount of water in it. Empty and store all containers with water after each use.

Outdoors

Keep your property clear of containers that might

contain standing water such as buckets, pails, flowerpots, and garbage cans.

Empty wading pools when not in use.

Always supervise hot tub use. Cover and lock when not in use.

Enclose swimming pools on all sides with a fence at least four feet high with an entry gate that locks. Consider using a safety cover, gate alarm, and/or pool alarms.

Constantly supervise children when near water.

Non-swimming children should wear a fitted life vest at all times in and around water.

Keep basic life-saving equipment (such as a pole, rope, and flotation device) by the pool and know how to use it.



All children should wear a fitted life vest at all times when in boats, canoes, rafts, and inner tubes.

3. FIRE/BURNS

One in every four fires that kill children are started by children. Supervising children at all times and observing the following tips can help keep children safe.

Keep lighters and matches out of reach at all times.

Install smoke detectors on every level of your home and near sleeping areas. Check the batteries once a month and replace the batteries twice per year.

Water heaters should be set to no more than 120° F to help prevent burns from hot water.



Always check the temperature of bath water before placing a child in the tub.

Fire extinguishers should be mounted in the kitchen, garage, and workshop.

Cooking is the number one cause of residential fires. Never leave cooking appliances in use unattended.

Burning candles should never be left unattended or put in locations where they can be knocked over by children or pets.

4. POISONING

Every year, millions of people are unintentionally poisoned. Children under the age of six pose the greatest risk. Follow these tips to poison-proof your home:

Keep the number of your poison control center on or near your telephone.

Store all household chemicals and medications (prescription and nonprescription) in their original and child-resistant containers. Always return these products to an appropriate storage location immediately after use.



Keep handbags and diaper bags out of reach of children.

Never leave a child unattended with a poisonous substance, not even for a second.

Know what plants in or around your home are poisonous and keep children away.

Educate children about the dangers posed by poisonous substances.

5. SUFFOCATION/ STRANGULATION

Most children that die of suffocation do so in unsafe sleeping environments, such as an adult bed, waterbed or day bed. Children should be provided with their own sleeping space.

Cribs should not have missing or broken slats or hardware, slats more than 2½ inches apart or have a loose-fitting mattress.



Remove all pillows, quilts, comforters, stuffed toys and other pillow-like soft products from the crib.

Consider using a sleeper or other sleep clothing as an alternative to blankets, with no other covering.

The safest sleeping position for a baby is on his or her back and reduces the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Plastic bags should be kept out of reach of children at all times.

Keep window blind cords and draw strings out of reach of children.

6. FIREARMS

Never leave firearms where children can access them. Firearms should always be stored in a locked location.

Ammunition should be locked up in a location separate from firearms.

Children should be taught that guns are dangerous and what to do if they encounter one:

Stop!
Don't touch.
Leave the area.
Tell an adult immediately.



With a firearm in one out of every two homes, parents should be aware of their children's surroundings when visiting other's homes to ensure the child's safety.